

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 045738
ORIGIN SY-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 MCT-01 ARA-10 CIAE-00 INR-10
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DRAFTED BY SY/CC/TAG:DAPLUCHINSKY:SC

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A/SY/OPS - VFSTMARS (IN DRAFT)

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-----120490 222100Z /73

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L S T A T E 0 4 5 7 3 8

FOR RSO FROM SY/CC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINS

SUBJECT: THE RED ARMY FACTION IN SOUTH AMERICA

1. SOUTH AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS AND BROADCAST OUTLETS

REPORTED IN LATE DECEMBER AND EARLY JANUARY THAT MEMBERS OF THE RED ARMY FACTION (RAF) WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN IN MEXICO, EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, AND COLOMBIA. ON FEBRUARY 17, A LUFTHANSA OFFICE IN BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, WAS BOMBED. THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES BUT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE. IN A FOUR PAGE COMMUNIQUE SENT TO THE CARACAS RADIO NETWORK AND SEVERAL OTHER COMMUNICATIONS OUTLETS, "THE ANDREA-BAADER BRIGADE OF THE GERMAN LIBERATION POPULAR FRONT" CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THIS BOMBING. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE COMMUNIQUE WARNS THAT THIS LUFTHANSA ATTACK "MARKS THE BEGINNING OF A

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NUMBER OF ATTACKS AGAINST GERMAN AND U.S. MONOPOLIES THAT PLUNDER AND EXPLOIT THE WORLD'S OPPRESSED PEOPLES."

2. COMBINED WITH KNUT FOLKERTS' ANTI-AMERICAN STATEMENT AT HIS TRIAL IN THE HAGUE IN EARLY JANUARY AND THE THREAT TO THE AMBASSADOR ON JANUARY 6, THE ABOVE COMMUNIQUE, IF IT INDEED IS FROM THE RAF, CAUSES CONCERN

THAT THE RAF IS BEGINNING TO RE-TARGET U.S. ESTABLISHMENTS. EVEN THOUGH THE OLD BAADER-MEINHOF GANG TARGETED U.S. MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE EARLY 1970'S, AS FAR AS WE KNOW THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE NEW RAF (I.E., POST-PONTO GROUP) HAS SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE UNITED STATES IN ITS THREATS.

3. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE RECENT LUFTHANSA BOMBING IN BOGOTA WAS COMMITTED BY A LATIN AMERICAN GROUP SHOWING SOLIDARITY WITH THE RAF. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD BE UNUSUAL SINCE WE KNOW OF NO RAF INTERACTION WITH THESE GROUPS. OUR FILES ALSO SHOW THAT THE LAST SERIOUS INCIDENT IN COLOMBIA INVOLVING A GERMAN TOOK PLACE ON NOVEMBER 1, 1977, WHEN A WEST GERMAN BUSINESS EXECUTIVE WAS KIDNAPPED. HE WAS LATER RELEASED FOR RANSOM AND NO POLITICAL STATEMENTS WERE ISSUED.

4. SINCE THE ABOVE LATIN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE WEST GERMAN POLICE WERE THE SOURCES OF SOME OF THESE REPORTS, CAN YOU CONFIRM THIS WITH YOUR CONTACTS? MOREOVER, CAN YOU CONFIRM FOLKERTS' STATEMENT AND COMMENT ON PARAGRAPH 2. VANCE

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TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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FOR RSOS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 45738 ACTION BONN DATED FEB 22:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 045738

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